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New Mobile App Offers “Jackpot” of Stress-Relieving Activities

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By Robyn Mincher, DCoE

The newest mobile application from [National Center for Telehealth and Technology](#) (T2) encourages you to get moving.

Designed for those experiencing post-combat stress, “[Positive Activity Jackpot](#),” available for Android systems, helps users creatively plan fun activities using “pleasant events scheduling,” a behavioral health therapy used to help regulate emotions and cope with stress.

“If you have enough positive events in your week, you’re just going to feel better,” said Dr. Amanda Edwards Stewart, T2 clinical psychologist. “With this therapy, we say ‘what can you do today to make yourself feel better?’ and go through a list [of activities]. The cool thing about a mobile app is that your phone has so much more functionality than sitting with a clinician.”

The app offers many ways to find activities in your community using the phone’s GPS navigation feature. Users can use a step-by-step search function to choose an activity based on its distance, cost or one that just suits their current mood. They can also search through the app’s “Jackpot!” game-like feature where users can pull a lever on a slot-machine screen to flip through a random list of local activities in their area found by the GPS.

“If a user wants a water activity, it pairs them up with the location and contact information of a place that rents boats. They can also contact people to come with them, either through their phone contact list or social media,” said Stewart.

After they participate in an activity, one can rate it to record how it helped their mood. If they don’t want to partake in an activity at the moment, users can schedule a future event on the app’s calendar. The app also links directly to contact information for the 24/7 [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) in case a user wants to talk to a trained professional.

While the app isn’t intended to replace provider treatment, it encourages positive thinking and promotes resilience by being proactive.

“When you don’t have enough that is positive in your day-to-day life, it can impact your



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mood,” Stewart said. “In order to help build resilience to face tough times and keep your mood up during stress, you need enough positive events in your week. It helps you cope with stress easier and keeps your mood up.”

The app is the latest [mobile resource](#) that T2, a [Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury](#) center, developed using unique technology to advance psychological health in the military community. These apps not only make resources more accessible, they encourage help-seeking behavior.

“We’re providing ways people can get mental health care that minimize stigma,” Stewart said. “Putting this app in a service member’s hands gives them tools to help themselves and helps connects them to providers when needed.”

T2 offers a [clinician’s guide](#) for the “Positive Activity Jackpot” mobile app that explains pleasant events scheduling therapy and helps navigate through the app’s features. [Download the app](#) and let us know what you think.

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